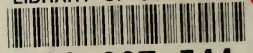


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THE

CONSTITUTION AND LAWS

OF

Rensselaer School,

IN TROY, NEW-YORK;

ADOPTED BY THE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES,

26.6
55.54

March 11, 1825.



TROY,

PRINTED BY TUTTLE AND RICHARDS.

1825.

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AMOS EATON, Esq. of Troy,
Professor of Chemistry and Natural Philosophy, and Lecturer on
Geology, Land Surveying, &c.

Dr. LEWIS C. BECK, of Albany,
Professor of Botany, Mineralogy and Zoology.



Mr. H. N. LOCKWOOD, of Troy, Treasurer.
Dr. MOSES HALE, of Troy, Secretary.

ASSISTANTS are elected temporarily by the President and Professors.

RECEIVED BY THE SECRETARY OF THE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON, D. C.

NOV 10 1898

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON, D. C.

NOV 10 1898

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

WASHINGTON, D. C.

CONSTITUTION
OF
RENSSELAER SCHOOL.



AT a meeting of the Board of Trustees appointed in the letter inserted below, on the eleventh day of March, 1825, at the building usually called the Old Bank Place, near the sloop lock, at the north end of the city of Troy, in the state of New-York, it was resolved :—

First. That the letter addressed by the Honorable Stephen Van Rensselaer, to the Rev. Samuel Blatchford, D. D. dated at Albany, Nov. 5, 1824, and another dated at Washington, Feb. 11, 1825, be the Constitution of the School therein mentioned, for the government of all the future by-laws and transactions of said board of trustees, and of all other persons concerned in said school. And that all alterations of the rules and orders contained in the letters, and every other exercise of the powers and duties of the board of trustees shall be in accordance with the object of the school, as set forth in said letters.

Second. That the school mentioned in said letters shall be known and called by the name, RENSSELAER SCHOOL, and the board of trustees shall be known

and called by the name and title of the President and Trustees of Rensselaer School, and shall do all their legal acts and transact all business in that name.

Copies of the letters before referred to, which are adopted as the Constitution of Rensselaer School.

TO THE REV. DR. BLATCHFORD, OF LANSINGBUBGH.

Dear Sir—I have established a school at the north end of Troy, in Rensselaer county, in the building usually called the Old Bank Place, for the purpose of instructing persons, who may choose to apply themselves, in the *application of science to the common purposes of life*. My principal object is, to qualify teachers for instructing the sons and daughters of Farmers and Mechanics, by lectures or otherwise, in the application of experimental chemistry, philosophy, and natural history, to agriculture, domestic economy, the arts and manufactures. From the trials which have been made by persons in my employment at Utica, Whitesborough, Rome, Auburn and Geneva, during the last summer, I am inclined to believe, that competent instructors may be produced in the school at Troy, who will be highly useful to community in the diffusion of a very useful kind of knowledge, with its application to the business of living. Apparatus for the necessary experiments has been so much simplified, and specimens in natural history have become subjects of such easy attainment, that but a small sum is now re-

quired as an out-fit for an instructor in the proposed branches of science. Consequently, every school district may have the benefit of such a course of instruction about once in two or three years, as soon as we can furnish a sufficient number of teachers. I prefer this plan to the endowment of a single public institution, for the resort of those only, whose parents are able and willing to send their children from home, or to enter them for several years upon the Fellenberg plan. It seems to comport better with the habits of our citizens and the genius of our government, to place the advantages of useful improvement, equally within the reach of all.

Whether my expectations will ever be realized or not, I am willing to hazard the necessary expense of making the trial. Having procured a suitable building, advantageously located among farmers and mechanics, and having furnished funds, which are deemed sufficient by my agent in this undertaking, for procuring the necessary apparatus, &c. it now remains to establish a system of organization, adapted to the object. You will excuse me, if I attach too much consequence to the undertaking. But it appears to me, that a board of trustees to decide upon the manner of granting certificates of qualifications, to regulate the government of students, &c. is essential. I therefore take the liberty to appoint you a Member, and PRESIDENT of a Board of Trustees for this purpose. I appoint the following gentlemen Trustees of the same board. The Rev. Dr. *Blatchford* and *Elias Parmelee*, of *Lansingburgh*; *Guert Van Schoonhoven* and *John Cramer*, Esqrs. of *Waterford*; *Simeon De Witt* and *T. Romeyn*

Beck, of Albany; *John D. Dickinson* and *Jedediah Tracy*, of Troy. And I appoint *O. L. Holley*, Esq. of Troy, and *T. R. Beck*, of Albany, First and Second Vice-Presidents of said Board.

As a few regulations are immediately necessary, in order to present the school to the public, it seems necessary that I should make the following orders, subject to be altered by the Trustees, after the end of the first term.

Order 1. The Board of Trustees is to meet at times and places to be notified by the President, or by one of the Vice-Presidents, in the absence or disability of the President. One half of the members of the board are to form a quorum for doing business. A majority of the members present may fill any vacancy which happens in the board; so that there may be two members resident in Troy, two in Lansingburgh, two in Waterford, and two in Albany. The powers and duties of the Trustees to be such as those exercised by all similar boards—the object of the school being always kept in view.

Order 2. I appoint *Dr. Moses Hale*, of Troy, Secretary, and *Mr. H. N. Lockwood*, Treasurer.

Order 3. I appoint *Amos Eaton*, of Troy, Professor of Chemistry and Experimental Philosophy, and Lecturer on Geology, Land surveying, and the laws regulating town officers and jurors. This office to be denominated the senior professorship.

Order 4. I appoint *Lewis C. Beck*, of Albany, Pro-

essor of Mineralogy, Botany and Zoology, and lecturer on the social duties peculiar to Farmers and Méchanics. This office to be denominated the junior professorship.

Order 5. The first term is to commence on the first Monday in January next, and to continue fifteen weeks. For admission to the course, including the use of the library and reading room, each student must pay twenty-five dollars to the treasurer, or give him satisfactory assurances that it will be paid in one year. In addition to this, each section of students must pay for the chemical substances they consume, and the damage they do to apparatus.

Order 6. All the pay thus received by the treasurer, or for parts of courses of instruction, is to be paid over to said professors as the reward of their services.

Order 7. In giving the course on Chemistry, the students are to be divided into sections, not exceeding five in each section. These are not to be taught by seeing experiments and hearing lectures, according to the usual method. But they are to lecture and experiment by turns, under the immediate direction of a professor or a competent assistant. Thus, by a term of labor, like apprentices to a trade, they are to become operative chemists.

Order 8. At the close of the term, each student is to give sufficient tests of his skill and science before examiners, to be appointed by myself, or by the

trustees if I do not appoint. The examination is not to be conducted by question and answer; but the qualifications of students are to be estimated by the facility with which they perform experiments and give the rationale; and certificates or diplomas are to be awarded accordingly.

Order 9. One librarian, or more, to be appointed by the professors, will be keeper of the reading room. All who attend at the reading room, are to respect and obey the orders of the librarian, in regard to the library and conduct while in the room.

Order 10. Any student who shall be guilty of disorderly or ungentlemanly conduct, is to be tried and punished by the president, or vice-president, and two trustees. The punishment may extend to expulsion and forfeiture of the school privileges, without a release from the payment of fees. But a student may appeal from such decision to the board of trustees.

This instrument, or a copy of it, is to be read to each student before he becomes a member of the school; and he is to be made to understand that his matriculation is to be considered as an assent to these regulations.

STEPHEN VAN RENSSELAER.

Albany, Nov. 5, 1824.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 11, 1825.

Dear Sir—I offer my acknowledgments for the interest you have taken in promoting the school over which you preside. I have inclosed a draft, hastily drawn up, of By-Laws, for the government of the school, which I beg to submit to yourself, and the gentlemen associated with you, for consideration and amendment. I flatter myself that the school will succeed, and the advantages I anticipated will be realized.

With respect, yours sincerely,

S. V. RENSSELAER.

[ENCLOSED DRAFT.]

1. That there be two terms in each year, of 12 or 15 weeks each, to be called the summer term, and winter term. The summer term to commence in May; the winter term to commence in January—say the last of May and January.

2. That during the summer term the students shall be taught the elementary principles of the science of chemistry, experimental philosophy, natural history, land surveying, &c. with their application to agriculture, manufactures, and the arts.

3. That, with the consent of the proprietors, a number of well cultivated farms and work-shops in the vicinity of the school, be entered on the records

of the school, as places of scholastic exercise for students, where the application of the sciences may be most conveniently taught.

4. That during the winter term students be exercised in giving lectures, by turns, on all the branches taught in the summer term, under the direction of the professors, or their assistants, in order to qualify them for giving instruction in those branches. And that a course of evening lectures be given in the winter term, by the professors, so as to embrace elementary views of the whole course of instruction given at the school.

5. That an annual commencement be held in April, at the close of the winter term, for conferring diplomas on those found qualified.

BY-LAWS
OF
RENSSELAER SCHOOL.



THE Board of Trustees, considering the preceding communications as forming the Constitution, proceed to enact some necessary by-laws, to go into operation at the close of the present term, to wit: on and after the nineteenth day of April next.

Article 1. A course of instruction shall be given at said school annually, which shall be divided into two terms of fifteen weeks to each. The first term, to be called the summer term, shall commence annually on the third Wednesday in May, and continue fifteen weeks; and the second term, to be called the winter term, on the third Wednesday in January next ensuing, and continue till the last Wednesday in April.

Article 2. A school commencement shall be held on the last Wednesday in April annually. Certificates or diplomas shall be awarded and conferred, on the day of commencement, agreeable to the spirit and intent of the constitution.

Article 3. No person shall be admitted as a member of the annual class, under the age of fourteen

years; but persons may attend on the conditions presented in the next article, at and above the age of ten years.

Article 4. For admission as a member of the annual class, the candidates must be well versed in reading, writing, common arithmetic, and English grammar. It is very desirable, though it will not be demanded, that he should have a knowledge of the Latin language; and he would be much better prepared if he should first receive a collegiate education. Besides the members of the annual class, persons will be admitted as *temporary students*. Such students will attend lectures and recitations, but will not be exercised in the manipulations of experiments. They will not receive the commencement diplomas, but may have certificates of attendance on the lectures. Temporary students will pay half the fees of annual students, reckoning the time from their entering the school to their departure.

Article 5. Every person, after receiving the commencement degree, shall ever after remain perpetual member of Rensselaer School, until he shall resign or be expelled for misconduct, and shall be entitled to the right of attending lectures and the reading room free of all charges. And the trustees shall have a right, at any time, to call upon him, by letter or otherwise, whether his residence shall be in the United States or in a foreign country, and demand of him an explanation of whatever they deem immoral or dishonorable conduct. On his neglecting or refusing to exonerate himself from the charges, he

shall be expelled. It shall be the duty of every person while a member, to give notice to the trustees, at least once in three years, how he is employed, and what success has attended his scientific labors, and what scientific discoveries he has made. And it shall be the duty of the trustees to aid every worthy industrious member in procuring him merited patronage.

Article 6. The exercises of the members of the annual class shall be as follows:—During the summer term, the students shall attend courses of lectures on chemistry, on experimental philosophy, including astronomy, on so much mathematics as is necessary for land surveying, on geology, mineralogy, botany, and zoology. During these lectures each student shall examine specimens and operate with his own hands, so far as to become familiar with every important subject of natural history, and every manipulation; but he will not give lectures himself before the winter term. He will be conducted by a professor or an assistant, at stated periods, to the farms attached to the schools, and be directed to keep a journal of the progress of vegetation under the hands of the agriculturist, during the summer term; and particularly to analyze all the kinds of soil and manures, used by the cultivators of the school farms, with a view to become acquainted with the causes of success and of failure. He will also be conducted to all the manufactories and workshops connected with the school, and be taught the application of science to all the most important operations of the artist.

Article 7. During the winter term, each student will be employed in giving experimental and demonstrative lectures, on the subjects of his summer course of instruction; agreeable to the plan set forth in the constitution. He will also hear an entire course of lectures on each subject—also on the laws regulating town officers and jurors, and on the social duties peculiar to farmers and mechanics. It will be the duty of the professors so to conduct the winter course, as to enable the diligent student to prepare himself for giving instruction on all the branches taught in the school, by lectures, experiments, and specimens; whether his services be required before a popular audience, or academic students, or in aid of other schools, which it is hoped may be formed on a similar plan for improvement.

Article 8. As the health of both body and mind requires considerable recreation, the following employments shall be the substitutes for those adopted at other schools. In the summer term the students shall be exercised by sections, under the direction of the teachers, in the art of inoculating and engrafting trees, transplanting by roots, cutting and layers, pruning trees, surveying farms, calculating heights and distances, measuring corded wood, scantling and boards, and the solid contents of timber, gauging casks, taking measures, and calculating the velocity and pressure of rivers, water race-ways, aqueducts, &c. collecting and preserving plants and minerals, and in such other laborious exercises as shall comport with the object of the school.

In the winter term the students shall be exercised

by sections, at the work-shop in the school building, in the use of tools, to qualify them for making repairs and performing small jobs, when a professional artist is not at hand. By such exercises in the work-shop it is not intended that students shall be qualified for exercising any of the mechanical arts; but for avoiding the delay and expense of calling a distant mechanic to accomplish a purpose which does not require a set of tools appertaining to any trade. Besides it is well known, that by a little labor in the work-shop, young persons acquire a taste for the mechanical arts, which will ever after inspire correct views on such subjects. It appears from the first letter of the patron of this institution, that he does not approve of entering young persons in the school for a number of years sufficient for learning a trade, or for becoming an expert laborer in the field. These qualifications he thinks are most advantageously acquired in the shop of a real artist, or in the service of a laboring farmer. But he wishes him to be instructed "in the application of science to the common purposes of life," by a course of experimental exercises, which cannot be obtained in the workshop or in the field. Having thus acquired a practical knowledge of the elementary basis of every calling, with its dependance on all others, he will be qualified for entering the workshop of a particular artisan, or for the labors of a particular farm, or for studying a learned profession, which requires a general knowledge of every known pursuit.

Article 9. Each member of the annual class shall

pay the treasurer, or secure to be paid in one year, fifteen dollars for each term, on receiving his ticket of admission from the treasurer. No student shall be received into the annual class for less than the whole annual course. Temporary students may be received for any portion of either term at half the proportional fees of the annual students. Very young persons ought to attend one whole course as temporary students, and one course as annual students; but this will not be demanded.

Article 10. The annual examination shall begin so many days before the day of commencement as to leave one day for every five students who are to be examined. The examination shall be public; each student giving satisfactory tests of his qualifications by short experimental lectures. Each student, who is found sufficiently dexterous as an experimenter, and well qualified for giving rationale, and making applications of the sciences to the useful purposes of life, will receive a diploma, to be called the Rensselaer Degree, for which he shall pay four dollars. This diploma shall set forth his having attended an annual course, and his qualifications in the particular application of the sciences to agriculture, domestic economy, manufactures and the arts. Also, that he has given sufficient evidence of those qualifications, by a course of experimental lectures before the school. Whereupon he will be presented to the world as competent to give instruction, or to perform any other duty, or enter upon any employment wherein such qualifications are required. But this degree shall not be conferred upon any person,

until he shall have arrived at the age of sixteen years. The examination will be strict and severe; and those who are not found to be qualified, but are sufficiently studious, may remain in the school until qualified, without paying any additional fees.

Article 11. A list of farms and work-shops, as directed in the constitution, to be entered on the records of the school, by the consent of the proprietors, as places of scholastic exercise, shall be made by the professors, and presented to the president, before the third Wednesday in May next. And it shall be the duty of the president, with the consent of two other trustees, to order such of them to be entered on the records as may be deemed expedient; and to order a list thereof to be published in one newspaper in Waterford, Lansingburgh, Troy and Albany.

Article 12. In addition to the meetings of the board of trustees, to be notified by the president as ordered in the constitution, there shall be an annual meeting of said board at the school on the day of commencement, to wit: on the last Wednesday in April, at ten o'clock in the morning.

Article 13. The rules and by-laws heretofore made by this board, having been intended for the temporary government of the school in its incipient state, are to be considered as void and of no further effect, after the nineteenth day of April next.

Article 14. All further rules, necessary for the in-

ternal government of the school, may be made, temporarily, by the faculty of said school, to remain in force during the pleasure of the board of trustees. The faculty consists of the President and Professors; whose orders shall be strictly obeyed by the students. It shall be the duty of the faculty to appoint, from among the students, a suitable number of assistants, and to change them from time to time, so that each studious and orderly student shall become assistant once or more during the course; and for the time being each assistant shall be respected by the students of his sections. The faculty are also authorised to appoint a school steward, with such privileges and duties as may be deemed expedient.

By Order of the Board.

S. BLATCHFORD, *President.*

MOSES HALE, *Secretary.*

NOTICES.



STUDENTS ought to be at the school punctually on the third Wednesday in May; for the practical exercises will commence without delay. A considerable number of students may be furnished with plain board and lodging, by the school-steward, at *One Dollar and Fifty Cents* per week; and any number may be boarded and lodged within a very short distance of the school, at *One Dollar and Seventy-Five Cents* per week.

No expense will be required for rooms. The students will have the privilege of resorting to a spacious, airy room, which is denominated the *Common Reading Room*—here they will assemble by sections during those short intervals which will occur between the exercises. In this room is placed a very ample *Scientific Library*, to which the members of the institution will have free access. Suitable conveniences are also provided for the taking of notes, and for reference to the very best authorities.

Besides the Library, the reading room is furnished with a case of *Chemical Principles*, together with the principal compounds, arranged according to the Text-Book for chemical lectures.

A case of *select apparatus* is also provided, sufficient for the illustration of the principles of Experimental Philosophy, and for practical Mathematics.

This room is, moreover, furnished with Geological and other necessary maps, and the most perfect suit of *American Geological specimens*, hitherto collected. There is likewise an extensive collection of plants, and the most necessary specimens in Zoology.

Students are taught to perform all experiments with the most particular regard to neatness and economy; using small, light apparatus, and operating with small quantities of matter, excepting where the nature of the experiment requires larger quantities. Of the feasibility and great excellence of the plan of this school, and the effective character of the instructions given by the Professors, the trustees have recently had a very gratifying proof, by the exhibitions of several students. After only seven weeks instruction, they acquitted themselves in a very satisfactory manner, both as to their knowledge of the rationale of the propositions respectively assigned to them, and the neatness and facility with which they gave the experimental illustrations.

It will be expected that the students provide for themselves the following Text-Books, which are read in the school.

Chemical Instructor,
Webster's Philosophy,
Cuvier's Zoological Classification,
Geology,
Manual of Botany,
Mineralogical Syllabus.



The necessary expenses for a whole annual course are the following :

Board, (30 weeks,) at \$1,50	-	\$45
Instruction, and diploma fees,	-	34
Washing, (about)	- - -	8
Text-Books, (about)	- - -	5
Stationary,	- - -	2
Proportion of fuel and lights,	-	2
Total,		<hr/> \$96

S. BLATCHFORD, *President*
of the Board of Trustees.

MARCH 14, 1825.

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